

CITIZENS TASK FORCE ON TV VIOLENCE

Sponsored by: Senator Kent Conrad (ND)
Speaker: Reed Hundt, Federal Communications Commission Chair

WHEN: Thursday, January 30, 1997
WHO ATTENDED: Harriet Steenson
Louella Marlin
WHERE: Senate Room C-4, Capitol Building,
Washington, D.C.
NUMBER IN ATTENDANCE: 25-30
RESPONSIBILITY: Represent National FCE, gather
information, plan Coalition action
regarding the request for a hearing
on the television rating system

Representatives from the following national groups attended:

National Association for the Education of Young Children
Future Wave
National Sheriffs Association
National Medical Association
American Medical Association Alliance
National Assoc. of Elementary School Principals
American Psychiatric Association
National PTA
Advocates for Children and Youth
National Foundation to Improve Television
National Association of Secondary School Principals
American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
National Coalition on Television Violence
American Academy of Pediatrics
→ National Association for Family & Community Education
National Child Care Association

American Nurses Association
National Alliance for Non-violent Programming
National Association of School Psychologists
National Education Association
United Church of Christ
Center for Media Education
Children's Defense Fund
American Psychological Association
KIDSNET
United States Catholic Conference
Children's Television Workshop
Recreational Software Advisory Council
Canadian Embassy

SENATOR KENT CONRAD (ND) reiterated the initial goals of the Coalition:

- a) Call for a White House Conference on Television Violence
- b) Call for the V Chip technology to be used in television
- c) Call for 3 hours per week of educational children's
television programming
- d) Call for a television rating system

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CITIZENS TASK FORCE ON TV VIOLENCE, page 2

SENATOR CONRAD noted the initial goals had been reached with

- a) the White House Conference held last spring, ✓
- b) the V Chip technology to be mandated in 1998, ✓
- c) the 3-hour rule instituted in August and ✓
- d) the television rating system implemented last month. ✓

HOWEVER Coalition members and Senators Conrad and Lieberman agree with the 80% of parents surveyed who want a **CONTENT-BASED RATING SYSTEM**, rather than the recently implemented age-based rating system for television programs.

THE CITIZENS TASK FORCE ON TV VIOLENCE and Senators Conrad and Lieberman continue to lobby for the S, (Sex) V, (Violence) and L (Language) rating system to be used by the television industry. Senator Conrad's view was to increase the viewer's information by using the Recreational Software Advisory Council's system of adding a number after each letter to indicate level of Sex, Violence and Language, e.g. V-1,2,3, or 4.

→ SENATE HEARINGS (sponsored by Senators McCain-AZ and Burns-MT) on the television rating system will be held **FEBRUARY 26**.

→ THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION HEARINGS will be held later **ONLY IF** there are enough public requests asking for a hearing. FCC CHAIR REED HUNDT stated that there is not a majority vote within the FCC to hold a public hearing at this time.

A SECOND AND EQUALLY PRESSING ISSUE: IN APRIL, TV licensing for digital TV (which, according to Reed Hundt, will revolutionize the industry in 4 years) will begin. Reed Hundt does not have a majority vote within the FCC to retain a percentage of the airwaves for public use.

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APR 2 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

March 10, 1997

Chairman Reed Hundt and FCC Commissioners
c/o Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street N.W. Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt and Commissioners:

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RE:CS Docket No. 97-55, FCC 97-34

I am writing on behalf of the National PTA and the Denton Avenue PTA to voice my opposition to the v-chip rating system as presented by Jack Valenti, Chair of the TV Rating Implementation Group, on January 19, 1997. The rating symbol on the TV screen does not provide sufficient content information so that parents can make decisions about what is appropriate TV programming for their children. Major surveys released this fall which demonstrate overwhelming parent preference for a rating system that gives parents information about the content of programs were conducted by the National PTA, *U.S. News and World Report*, and Media Studies Center/Roper. Parents do not want the TV industry to interpret what is best for their children. Parents want to make those choices themselves based on content information about the program. Any rating system without content descriptions on the screen and publicized in periodicals that carry TV scheduling is useless.

The FCC, by law, is required to demonstrate whether the industry's rating system has met statutory requirements of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. I do not believe this system does so and ask that the FCC not approve the industry rating system. Instead, we request the following:

That under no circumstances should the FCC approve the industry's rating system. Further, the FCC should accept no rating system that does not include content information about programs such as V (for violence), S (for special depiction and nudity) and L (for language);

That the FCC require a V-chip band broad enough that would allow parents to receive more than one rating system;

That the rating icon on the TV screen be made larger, more prominently placed on the screen, and appear more frequently during the course of a program;

That the rating board be independent of the industry and the FCC and that it include parents; and

That any rating system approved by the FCC be evaluated by independent research to determine if it meets the needs of parents.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on an issue so important to children and families.

Sincerely,

Angela Flori

Angela Flori
One North Dr.
New Hyde Park, N.Y. 11040

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March 1997

March 1997

Chairman Reed Hundt and FCC Commissioners
c/o Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street N.W., Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

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APR 2 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Hundt and Commissioners:

RE: CS Docket No. 97-55, FCC 97-34

I am writing on behalf of the National PTA and the Skillin Elementary School PTA in South Portland, ME to voice my opposition to the v-chip rating systems presented by Jack Valenti, Chair of the TV Rating Implementation Group, on January 17, 1997. The rating symbol on the TV screen does not provide sufficient content information so that parents can make decisions about what is appropriate TV programming for their children. Major surveys released this fall which demonstrate overwhelming parent preference for a rating system that gives parents information about the content of programs were conducted by the National PTA, *U.S. News and World Report* and Media Studies Center/Roper. Parents do not want the TV industry to interpret what is best for their children. Parents want to make those choices themselves based on content information about the program. Any rating system without content descriptions on the screen and publicized in periodicals that carry TV scheduling is useless.

The FCC, by law, is required to determine whether the industry's rating system has met statutory requirements of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. I do not believe this system does so and ask that the FCC not approve the industry rating system. Instead, we request the following:

- * That under no circumstances should the FCC approve the industry's rating system. Further, the FCC should accept no rating system that does not include content information about programs such as V(for violence), S(for sexual depiction and nudity), and L(for language);
- * That the FCC require a V-chip band broad enough that would allow parents to receive more than one rating system;
- * That the rating icon on the TV screen be made larger, more prominently placed on the screen, and appear more frequently during the course of a program;
- * That the rating board be independent of the industry and the FCC and that it include parents; and
- * That any rating system approved by the FCC be evaluated by independent research to determine if it meets the needs of parents.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on an issue so important to children and families.

Sincerely,

Diane Lallie
Skillin School PTA President
South Portland, ME

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March 10, 1997

Chairman Reed Hundt and FCC Commissioners
c/o Federal Communications Commission
1910 M Street N.W., Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

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APR 2 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Hundt and Commissioners:

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RE: CS Docket No. 97-55, FCC 97-34

I am writing on behalf of the National PTA and the West Virginia PTA to voice my opposition to the v-chip rating system as presented by Jack Valenti, Chair of the TV Rating Implementation Group, on January 17, 1997. The rating symbol on the TV screen does not provide sufficient content information so that parents can make decisions about what is appropriate TV programming for their children. Major surveys released this fall which demonstrate overwhelming parent preference for a rating system that gives parents information about the content of programs were conducted by the National PTA, U.S. News and World Report, and Media Studies Center/Roper. Parents do not want the TV industry to interpret what is best for their children. Parents want to make those choices themselves based on content information about the program. Any rating system without content descriptions on the screen and publicized in periodicals that carry TV scheduling is useless.

The FCC, by law, is required to determine whether the industry's rating system has met statutory requirements of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. I do not believe this system does so and ask that the FCC not approve the industry rating system. Instead, I request the following:

- * That under no circumstances should the FCC approve the industry's rating system. Further, the FCC should accept no rating system that does not include content information about programs such as V(for violence), S(for sexual depiction and nudity) and L(for language);

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- * That the FCC require a V-chip band broad enough that would allow parents to receive more than one rating system;
- * That the rating icon on the TV screen be made larger, more prominently placed on the screen, and appear more frequently during the course of a program;
- * That the rating board be independent of the industry and the FCC and that it include parents; and
- * That any rating system approved by the FCC be evaluated by independent research to determine if it meets the needs of parents.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on an issue so important to children and families.

Sincerely,

Nelda Masters
R.D 1, Box 496-A
New Cumberland, WV
26047



CS97-55

Concilio para la Educación de la Familia y la Comunidad de Puerto Rico, Inc.

Sra. Elba Ruiz
Presidenta

Sra. Carmen Almodóvar
Presidenta Electa

Sra. Maribel Rivera
Vice-Presidenta Programa

Sra. Aida L. Vázquez
Vice-Presidenta
Política Pública

Sra. Luz D. Rivera
Secretaria

Sra. Monserrate Hernández
Tesorera

Sra. Isabel Hernández
Relacionista Pública

Dra. Gloria Torres
Directora Auxiliar a/c
Programa Economía del Hogar

Sra. Paz N. Varela Berrios
Supervisora Regional
San Juan

February 13, 1997

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APR 2 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

The Honorable Rachelle Chong
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Chong:

We are writing to urge the Federal Communications Commission to hold a public hearing as part of its review of the television industry's ratings system.

The National Association for Family & Community Education and its affiliate, Puerto Rico State Association, are grass-roots organizations which have been actively involved in family issues for the past 60 years. We are concerned that the family issue of the recently implemented television rating system does not address the need of parents.

The questions generated by the current age-based television ratings system deserve a public hearing. We urge you to hold such a hearing soon on this issue which is so important to families in America today.

Sincerely,

Aida L. Vázquez
Country Club
207 St. GW 19
Carolina, Puerto Rico 00982

(enclosed signatures P. R. FCE members)

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Elin Morales

Ana Celia Morales

Lazari Lopez

Virginia Padin

Rosario Martinez

Juanita Oyola

Angelita Rodriguez

Ana M. Hernandez

Julia Fajó

Celeste Lucero

Dora Juarez

Norman Ortiz

Maria A. Velez

Maria Morales

Carmen Olivieri

Caridad Plasencia

Beigida Martinez

Victoria Rios

Carlos Ortiz

Marisel Colon

Yorma Nunez

Angelica Rodriguez

Ana Luisa Moreno

Warren Lopez

Annie Carter

Ana A. Acobes

Helen Padin

PUERTO RICO FCE MEMBERS

(Country Club - Carolina, P. R.)

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March 7, 1997

Chairman Reed Hundt and FCC Commissioners
c/o Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street N. W., Rm. 222
Washington, DC 20554

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APR 2 1997
Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Hundt and Commissioners:

RE: CS Docket No. 97-55, FCC 97-34

I am writing on behalf of the National PTA and myself as a concerned parent to voice my opposition to the v-chip rating system as presented by Jack Valenti, Chair of the TV Rating Implementation Group, on January 17, 1997. The rating symbol on the screen does not provide enough information so that as a parent I can make decisions about what is appropriate TV programming for my children. As a parent, I believe it is my right to interpret what is best for my children not the TV industry. I feel that I can best make that decision based on content information of the program rather than the age system currently being used. Any rating system without content descriptions on the screen and publicized in periodicals that carry TV scheduling is useless.

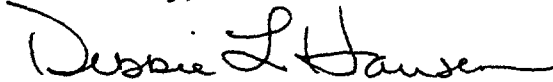
The FCC, by law, is required to determine whether the industry's rating system has met statutory requirements of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. I do not believe this system does so and ask that the FCC not approve the industry rating system. Instead, I ask the following be approved:

- * That under no circumstances should the FCC approve the industry's rating system. Further, the FCC should accept no rating system that does not include content information about programs such as *V(for violence)*, *S(for sexual depiction and nudity)* and *L(for language)*;
- * That the FCC require a V-chip band broad enough that would allow parents to receive more than one rating system;
- * That the rating icon on the TV screen be made larger, more prominently placed on the screen, and appear more frequently during the course of the program;

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List ABOVE

- * That the rating board be independent of the industry and the FCC , and that it include parents;
- * That any rating system approved by the FCC be evaluated by independent research to determine if it meets the needs of parents.

Sincerely,



Debbie L. Hansen
Newton, IA 50208

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Petition

March 11, 1997

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APR 2 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Chairman Reed Hundt and FCC Commissioners
c/o Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street N.W., Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt and Commissioners: **DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL**

RE: CS Docket No. 97-55, FCC 97-34

We are writing on behalf of the National PTA and the White Knoll Elementary PTA to voice our opposition to the v-chip rating system as presented by Jack Valenti, Chair of the TV Rating Implementation Group, on January 17, 1997. The rating symbol on the TV screen does not provide sufficient content information so that parents can make decisions about what is appropriate TV programming for their children. Major surveys released this fall which demonstrate overwhelming parent preference for a rating system that gives parents information about the content of programs were conducted by the National PTA, US News and World Report, and Media Studies Center/Roper. Parents do not want the TV industry to interpret what is best for their children. Parents want to make those choices themselves based on content information about the program. Any rating system without content descriptions on the screen and publicized in periodicals that carry TV scheduling is useless.

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That the FCC require a V-chip band broad enough that would allow parents to receive more than one rating system;

That the rating icon on the TV screen be made larger, more prominently placed on the screen, and appear more frequently during the course of a program;

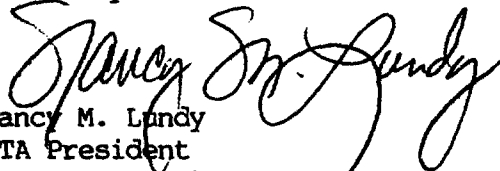
That the rating board be independent of the industry and the FCC and that it include parents; and

That any rating system approved by the FCC be evaluated by independent research to determine if it meets the needs of parents.

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Thank you for this opportunity to comment on an issue so important to children and families.

Sincerely,


Nancy M. Lundy
PTA President
White Knoll Elementary School
132 White Knoll Way
West Columbia, SC 29170

attached: support from the families of the White Knoll PTA

Name & address

Comments

Kim Fadgett 104 Parkwood Dr. W. Columbia SC

Support the Change

Billy Perrett 104 Parkwood Dr.

Support the Change

Anne Shirley 122 Parkwood Dr.

support

Brenda Hoff 922 Kitt Wake, Tex.

"

Carolyn Doty 119 King Way, Tex

"

Rhonda Zellar 307 Savanna Wds LN

"

Donna Grooms 121 Carlton Ct. Lex.

Support the change

Rusty Grooms 121 Carlton Ct, Lex.

Support the change

Janie Ryley 100 Fox Hollow Cir. W. Columbia

" " "

Name & address

Comments

Arline + Freddie Shuler (Grandparent)

104 Culbuth Lane, West Columbia SC 29169

Justin & Patricia Kohl

126 Robin Forest Dr. W. Columbia SC 29170

Ralph Varnadoe 2007 Shady Grove Rd. ²⁹⁰⁶³ Sumter, SC

Marcia K. Varnadoe

"

"

"

"

Julie Desrosiers, Lexington SC

KAREN VARNADOE, 14 TOUCHDOWN WAY, SC 29073 - NEEDS CHAIR

it is a help since the way

it is, but had rather have
a chair cycle

old system doesn't

provide enough information

I support a change

needs updating

- NEEDS CHAIR

Name & address

Comments

Isabel Oates, 720 Cedar Field Ln. W. Columbia SC

Dan Moran 213 Lakeshire Dr. Lex. SC

Name & address

Comments

Wanda Crosby 451 Laurel Rd

Pam Roof 135 Santa Barbara Ct.

Marty Peaves 150 Harrington Ct. W. Colo. S.C. 29170

Keith & Joyce Franks 105 Shelton Court West Columbia S.C. 29170

Magen & Chuck Silcox 307 Springcreek Ct " " "

Chuck & Jackie Ricks 314 Shirway Rd. Lexington SC 29073

Name & address

Comments

G. Shoemaker 134 Fox Crossing Rd W. Colo

V. Towery 137 Fox Crossing Rd. W. Colo

Name & address

Comments

M. Steve Cochran 205 Fox Crossing Rd. - W. Co. Ia 29170 Support PTA

Name: address

Comments

Rod & Joanne Jones 257 Bradley W. Colo. S.C. 29110

Norma M. Fursak 113 Burkett Dr. H. Colo. S.C. 29172

Norma Warren 3309 Hareydale Dr. West Colo. 29170

Fred & Jewel Berry 544 Hallsborough Dr. West Colo 29170

Eddie & Betty Riles 129 Shackleland W. Colo S.C. 29170

Name & address

Comments

Webbie Eubanks, 543 Hallsborough Dr	W. Cola SC 29170	Support V, S, L
Jennifer Freeman, 108 Ivy Field Rd	29170	Support V, S, L
Sally Freeman, 108 Ivy Field Rd	W. Cola 29170	Support V, S, L
Joan Ziegler, 204 Cornish Way	Lex. SC 29073	Support V, S, L
Tom Ziegler, 204 Cornish Way	Lex SC 29073	Support V, S, L
Joyce Ellis, 111 Spring	W. Cola SC 29170	Support V, S, L
Shannon Ellis, 122 Cloverwood Dr	Lex SC 29073	Support V, S, L

Name & address

Comments

Jeni Nelson	412 Kitti Wake Dr. W. Columbia, SC	We watch PBS more than any other TV. Don't have cable or satellite.
Barbara Jordan	108 Greenway Ct, W. Columbia, SC	Too vague
Jan Fogle	124 Shirway Rd. Lex S.C.	Ratings need to be clear
Duane Fogle	124 Shirway Rd Lex S.C.	Be More Specific
Kay Cook	1918 Rolling Hills Rd., Columbia, SC	More family-oriented shows, pl
Chris Cook	1918 Rolling Hills Rd, Columbia, SC	Better explanation of what shows contain violence, bad language, nudity, etc.
Dr. Todd Nelson,	412 Kitti Wake Dr., W. Columbia, SC	Ratings should be content based, not age-based

Name & address

Comments

Dobby F. Dobby 2105 Legrand Rd Columbia SC 29223

Chris Thomas 1043 Lynn Dr. West Columbia SC 29170

Cherry B Fuller 209 Springs Ct W Columbia SC 29170

Brenda Terry 1012 Canollan Dr W.C. 29169

Tammy Carnes 200 Cedar Field Ln. W. Columbia SC 29170

Karol Neubolt 106 Hexham Cr Trmo SC 29063

Name & address

Comments

Mariann Martin

Nancy Bailey 133 Savanna Woods Cr W. Co. 29170

Patricia Hornsby 174 E. Alderwood Cir. W. Co. 29170

Name & address

Comments

Rita Murrah
120 Lakeshire Dr
Lexington SC

I think we should have
both systems.

Name & address

Comments

Mark Derrick 2222 Woodford Rd.
Woodford, S.C. 29112

Oppose current TV ratings. Favor true, simple ratings that lets one know content of shows.

James Derrick

710 Laurel Rd.
Spartanburg, S.C. 29173
W.C. S.C. 29170

MARK RUCKER

241 FOX LAKE DR.

I FAVOR NEW SIMPLER LETTERS
I would like ~~see~~ more informative ratings.

Mark Rucker 241 Fox Lake W.C. S.C. 29170

James Rucker 144 Shadland W. Va.